

Message Text

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ORIGIN EB-07

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ROME

UNCLAS STATE 008406

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: EAIR, IT

SUBJECT: CIVIL AVIATION; GOI ACCEPTANCE OF TGC CHARTERS

REF: ROME 5527 (1974)

THE EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO APPROACH THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND CIVILAVIA IN AN EFFORT TO OBTAIN GOVERNMENT OF ITALY ACCEPTANCE OF TRAVEL GROUP CHARTERS TO ITALY. THE EMBASSY CAN DRAW ON THE FOLLOWING POINTS FOR ORAL PRESENTATION AND POSSIBLE INCORPORATION INTO A FACT SHEET.

1) NUMEROUS U.S. CATHOLIC ORGANIZATIONS ARE INTERESTED IN VISITING ITALY DURING THE HOLY YEAR. SINCE MANY OF THESE ORGANIZATIONS ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR AFFINITY CHARTERS, THEY HAVE BEEN INQUIRING ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF TGC CHARTERS TO ITALY AND HAVE REQUESTED ASSISTANCE.

2) ECAC ENDORSES TGC CHARTERS AS AN ACCEPTABLE TRANS-ATLANTIC CHARTER TYPE.

3) ALL ECAC MEMBERS EXCEPT THE SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES AND ITALY ACCEPT TGC CHARTERS. (OBVIOUSLY THIS INCLUDES ALL THE MEDITERRANEAN STATES SUCH AS GREECE, SPAIN, PORTUGAL, AND YUGOSLAVIA WHICH MAY BE VIEWED AS COMPARABLE TO ITALY

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IN TOURISM CONSIDERATIONS.)

4) THE GROWTH RATE FOR TGC CHARTERS HAS BEEN VERY MODEST WITH ONLY 218 TRANSATLANTIC TGC CHARTERS IN 1973. THIS REPRESENTS ONLY 1.5 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL U.S. TRANS-ATLANTIC CHARTER FLIGHTS.

5) THE GOVERNMENT OF ITALY'S RECENT STEPS TO ACCEPT INCLUSIVE TOUR CHARTERS HAS FACILITATED TRAVEL BETWEEN THE U.S. AND ITALY. IF ITALY NOW ACCEPTS TGC CHARTERS, AN ADDITIONAL SEGMENT OF THE PUBLIC WOULD BE ABLE TO TRAVEL TO ITALY AND PARTICIPATE IN THE EVENTS OF THE HOLY YEAR.

6) RECENTLY EXPERIENCED DECLINES IN PASSENGER AIR TRAFFIC BETWEEN THE U.S. AND ITALY (MINUS 8.9 PERCENT FROM FISCAL YEAR 1973 TO FISCAL YEAR 1974) SUGGEST THE APPROPRIATENESS OF ANY MEASURES THAT MAY CONTRIBUTE TO ARRESTING THE DECLINE.

7) EARLY RESPONSE FROM EMBASSY WOULD BE APPRECIATED AS CAB MUST NOTIFY CARRIERS WELL IN ADVANCE OF AVAILABILITY OF THIS CHARTER TYPE. KISSINGER

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